**Approved Topics (By General Topic Area)**

**Business Ethics**

* When, if ever, is whistleblowing ethically permissible?
* To whom does a business owe responsibility?
* Are employment-at-will contracts fair or just?
* Should businesses be required to provide child-care services?
* Are affirmative action policies in hiring ethically acceptable?
* Is deceptive advertising ever ethically permissible?
* Are deception and bluffing in business deals ethically acceptable?
* What are the ethical obligations of salespeople?
* Are sweatshops ethically permissible?
* Do businesses have obligations to try to prevent misuse of their products?
* Should there be harsher penalties for “white collar” crimes?
* Is it ethically permissible to have lower safety standards in overseas plants?
* Is the practice of awarding ‘sub-prime’ loans for profit ethically permissible?

**Economic Justice**

* Should the U.S. have a living wage requirement?
* Is the great unequal distribution of income and wealth in the U.S. just?
* What obligations, if any, does the state owe to the poor in our country?
* What obligations, if any, do the people and/or government of wealthy nations owe to the people of poorer nations?
* Should foreign aid ever be dependent on value judgments about other societies?
* Should foreign aid ever be dependent on political alliances?
* Should we use taxation to redistribute wealth?
* Should Social Security be privatized?
* Should we recognize a ‘right to work’?
* Is capitalism a just economic system?
* Could a socialist economic system be just or ethically right?
* What reparations, if any, does the federal government owe African-Americans for slavery?
* What reparations, if any, does the federal government owe Native Americans for genocide and theft of land?
* Should equal pay, whether along gender or racial lines, be legally required?

**Environmental Ethics and Animal Rights**

* What obligations, if any, do we owe toward endangered species?
* Should the government compensate people in or out of our country for exposure to controllable or man-made environmental hazards?
* Should the U.S. bear the primary responsibility for reducing hydrocarbons and other pollutants as the Kyoto Protocol recommends?
* Do human development needs ever trump conservationism?
* Is it permissible to pay foreign nations or Native American reservations to use their land for disposing of hazardous substances?
* Is it ever ethical to create genetically modified organisms?
* Is cloning non-human animals ever permissible?
* What ethical obligations, if any, do we owe to non-human animals?
* Is vegetarianism or veganism ethically obligatory?
* When, if ever, is scientific testing on animals permissible?
* Do zoos violate animal rights or welfare?
* Is hunting ever ethically permissible?

**Family and Relationships**

* Is sex selection of children morally permissible?
* Should same-sex marriage be recognized?
* Is it permissible to deny homosexuals the opportunity to adopt?
* Should prospective parents be licensed?
* What obligations do we owe to elderly or infirm parents?
* What obligations do we owe to future generations?
* Is “Tiger” parenting an ethical method of childrearing?

**Health Care Ethics**

* Is there a morally important difference between passive and active euthanasia?
* Are euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide permissible for patients that are NOT terminally ill?
* Is there ever an obligation to die?
* Can we permissibly involuntarily hospitalize people that are mentally ill or handicapped?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to breach patient confidentiality?
* How much control should the patient have over his/her medical treatment?
* Is it ever permissible to lie to patients?
* Should there be some form of socialized health care?
* What obligations do researchers owe to experimental participants?
* Should parents be allowed to enroll their children in potentially dangerous or treatment-denying medical research?
* Should physicians personally opposed to abortion or euthanasia be required to provide these services?
* Who (if anyone) should have the right to deny treatment deemed ‘medically futile’?
* Is triage morally permissible?
* Is embryonic stem cell research morally permissible?
* Should age be a determinant of who receives medical treatment?
* Should organ transplantation be denied or delayed in cases where the patient is responsible for his/her own condition?
* Should we pay people for blood and/or organ donations?
* Should minors be allowed to make their own medical decisions?
* Should minors be denied treatment on the basis of their parents’ religious beliefs?

**International Politics and Law**

* Should the United States join the International Court of Justice?
* Is a world governing body desirable?
* Is diplomatic immunity just?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to spy on a foreign government?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to impose economic penalties on foreign nations or citizens of foreign nations?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to support revolutionary movements in foreign nations?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to engage in political assassination?
* How should prisoners of war or ‘enemy combatants’ be treated?
* Is there an obligation to remain informed about human rights abuses and other crimes against humanity?
* How, if at all, should capital punishment be used in international law?
* What obligations, if any, do we owe to displaced persons/refugees?
* What policies should govern immigration law?
* Is unwanted humanitarian intervention ever permissible?

**Law and Ethics**

* Should the law reflect the moral or religious values of a community?
* Is it ever permissible for the state to publicly support a religious view?
* Should there be references to God in the Pledge of Allegiance and other public creeds?
* Should lawmakers appeal to religious beliefs to support legislation?
* Should the law make exceptions for the practices of religious minorities?
* When (if ever) is civil disobedience permissible?
* Is there a moral obligation to vote?
* Should there be Bad Samaritan laws?
* Should lawmakers be permitted to enact legislation that ignores or runs contrary to scientific consensus on an issue?
* Should capital punishment be allowed for the mentally ill or handicapped?
* Should capital punishment be allowed for minors?

**Personal Liberties**

* Is suicide ever morally permissible?
* What obligations do we owe to someone contemplating suicide?
* Should taking the Pledge of Allegiance ever be mandatory?
* Should hate speech be protected?
* When and where (if ever) can public smoking be prohibited?
* Should performance-enhancing drugs be prohibited for professional athletes?
* Should the U.S. outlaw Holocaust denial?
* Are laws that protect us from our own dangerous behaviors (such as seatbelt or helmet laws) morally acceptable?
* Is it ever permissible to censor art?
* Are maternal fetal abuse laws morally acceptable?
* What medical, psychiatric or genetic information (if any) should be available to employers?
* Should employers be allowed to require or forbid certain behaviors by their employees in their private lives?
* What moral responsibilities do I owe myself?
* Should scientific or academic research be guided by moral principles?

**Reproduction**

* Should third parties be required to pay for assisted reproduction?
* Should third parties be required to pay for birth control?
* Should abortion be allowed for fetuses that have life-threatening or debilitating disorders?
* Who (if anyone) should be required to submit to in vitro diagnosis?
* Is it ever wrongful to reproduce?
* Is human embryonic cloning morally permissible?
* Should minors be required to have parental consent to obtain birth control?
* Should minors be required to have parental consent to obtain an abortion?
* Should we allow postmenopausal women equal access to assisted reproduction?
* Is paid surrogacy morally acceptable?
* Are population control measures ever morally acceptable?
* Should pharmacists personally opposed to birth control or abortion be required to dispense these medications?
* Is it ever permissible to use genetic engineering (eugenics) on human beings?
* Can we permissibly require a pregnant woman to have a caesarian section if doing so is needed to secure the life or health of the fetus?

**Sexuality**

* Should the federal or state governments support programs that advocate abstinence?
* Is premarital sex morally permissible?
* Is adultery ever morally permissible?
* Should cybersex ever be considered infidelity?
* Are sadomasochistic sexual behaviors morally acceptable?
* Are same-sex sexual relationships morally permissible?
* Are laws against sodomy just?
* Are there any forms of pornography that should be censored?
* Is pornography sexist?
* Is prostitution morally permissible? (You focus on the prostitute, the john, or both.)
* Under what conditions (if any) is it permissible to discriminate against people on the basis of sexual orientation?
* Should third parties be required to pay for sex reassignment surgery?

**War, Terrorism and Humanitarian Intervention**

* Can terrorism ever be morally justified?
* Should rights ever be curtailed in times of war?
* Should rights ever be curtailed if it aids in the “war on terrorism”?
* When (if ever) is it permissible to declare war?
* Is torture ever morally permissible?